

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of this application, as presently amended and in light of the following discussion, is respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 4-17, and 19 are currently pending. Claim 18 has been canceled without prejudice; and Claims 1, 12, 17, and 19 have been amended by the present amendment. The changes to the claims are supported by the originally filed specification and do not add new matter.

In the outstanding Office Action, Claims 1 and 4-17 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 7,209,180 to Takagi et al. (hereinafter “the ‘180 patent”) in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,394,690 to Kobayashi (hereinafter “the ‘690 patent”); and Claims 18 and 19 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form.

Amended Claim 1 is directed to an image processor for processing a video signal, comprising: (1) aspect ratio information acquisition means for acquiring aspect ratio information about an original video signal by detecting a video identification signal that has been superimposed on the original video signal, wherein the acquired aspect ratio information is a two-bit code indicating a process of aspect ratio conversion on the original video signal; (2) aspect ratio conversion means for carrying out the process of aspect ratio conversion on the original video signal based on the acquired aspect ratio information to generate a processed video signal representing an image of the original video signal having a roundness of 1, wherein the aspect ratio conversion means has an operation mode in which the aspect ratio of the original video signal is changed automatically based on information about the original video signal, and an operation mode in which the aspect ratio of the original video signal is changed using a fixed scaling factor determined without referring to the original video signal; (3) background signal generation means for generating a background video

signal serving as a background of the processed video signal; and (4) video signal combination means for executing a process of combining the processed video signal and the background video signal, both having been subjected to aspect ratio conversion, to generate a synthesized video signal. Claim 1 has been amended to incorporate the limitations recited in Claim 18, which was indicated as allowable. No new matter has been added.

Independent Claims 12 and 17 have been amended in a manner analogous to the amendment to Claim 1. Further, Claim 19 has been amended to change the dependency, since Claim 18 has been canceled.

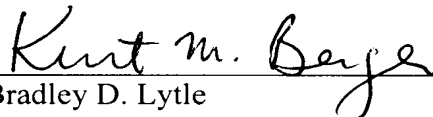
Based on the indicated allowability of Claim 18, Applicants respectfully submit that the rejections of Claims 1, 12, and 17 (and all associated dependent claims) are rendered moot by the present amendment to the independent claims. Further, Applicants respectfully submit that the present amendments to the claims should be entered since no new issues requiring consideration and/or search are being presented.

Thus, it is respectfully submitted that independent Claims 1, 12, and 17 (and all associated dependent claims) patentably define over any proper combination of the '180 and '690 patents.

Consequently, in view of the present amendment and in light of the above discussion, the outstanding grounds for rejection are believed to have been overcome. The application as amended herewith is believed to be in condition for formal allowance. An early and favorable action to that effect is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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